

Minutes of the Work Meeting of the Board of Commissioners, Carbon County, State of Utah, held May 20, 2015 at the Courthouse Building, Price, Utah, commencing at 3:00 p.m.

Those present: Casey Hopes, Commission Chair
Jae Potter, Commissioner
Jake Mellor, Commissioner

Also present: Seth Oveson, Clerk/Auditor
Lori Perez, Deputy Clerk
Christian Bryner, Attorney
Jason Llewelyn, Safety
Hal Stevens, Forest Service
Daniel Campbell, Roads

Clerk's Certificate of Compliance with Open Meeting Law was filed.

Commissioner Hopes welcomed everyone. The meeting began at 3:12 p.m.

1) **2015 Update – Hal Stevens, Federal Forest Service – J. Llewelyn**

Hal Stevens said the Federal Forest Service is required to do preseason fire planning meetings to discuss what is expected for this fire season.

The Forest Service's top priority is safety. Safety is the essence of how decisions are made. He discussed safety on all levels including while driving. Access, analyze, communicate and share risk before, during and after an event and not attempting unnecessary risk. They want to establish and enhance relationships with local responders.

He presented this year's fire manual, which contains the rules and risk management for all federal agencies except for the BIA. Hal discussed wild land fire fatality statistics and what the average is each year.

Ways to manage risks are: to decide not to put people on the mountain in isolated rugged terrain and fighting fires by the best approach. Allowing a fire to burn requires having enough people in place to deflect incoming calls from the public.

The question arises of why should a controlled burn be started and what is out there of value. A value for one person may not be for another like burning around a coal mine intake that may shut down the mine. Other key factors include wild land urban interface and watershed protection. Watershed damage can take a long time to recover. Using a bucket drop to fight a fire puts the helicopter pilot at risk and suppressing too many fires passes the risk onto future generations.

Fires are generally not in one jurisdiction and that needs to be identified in order to fight the fire. All agencies involved need to work together to evaluate and create a priority list. Hal explained WFDSS (Wild Land Fire Decision Support System) a data base used by the Forest Service to assess and document decisions made during a fire. The protection of sage grouse areas and the Community at Risk (CAR) lists were discussed.

Hal explained the following questions asked during a fire:

- A) Ask what are the critical values at risk
- B) What is the chance that the critical value will be impacted and what are the consequences
- C) What are the opportunities to manage fire to meet land management objectives
- D) Possibility of a high consequence events
- E) Who are the stake holders to be consulted prior to making a decision
- F) To make a risk decision what alternatives, objectives, strategies, tactics are being considered.
- G) What is the exposure of the responders for the alternatives being considered
- H) What is the success rate of the alternatives being considered
- I) What alternatives provides the best balance between the desired human exposure to responders
- J) What are the critical thresholds that will trigger consideration to propose the alternatives and how will they be monitored

Hal said our area works well together. The volunteer fire departments are critical during the first 24 hours of a fire. The more firemen qualified to fight wild land fires the better. Jason discussed which departments are qualified. To fight a fire on federal land a "red card" qualification is required.

The expected outcome when applying risk management strategies involve the five rights: is this the right plan, is it the right place, is it at the right time, do you have the right assets and do you have the right duration. The question is how long to expose people to the risk.

He discussed the three phases:

Preseason – what we are doing now

During the event

After the event – coming together to discuss what could have been done differently

There is the possibility of the smoke jumpers being redistributed and they may be stationed at our airport. It would make more resources available for the initial attack. The current program is focusing on dealing with fire prevention by attending community events. Jason is working on compiling County events to keep the cities up to speed and requested everyone's email address in order to send this information out.

Jason asked what things the County could do better. Hal said one thing he learned from the Seeley Fire is better coordination between the two counties. Commissioner Potter said during the Seeley fire there was an issue of communications and who was in charge. The Commission felt like they were always playing catch up. No real information was coming in until after the fact. Hal explained that things did escalate fast but who knew the fire would travel so far. In the future he suggested that the Commission get involved in the WFDSS meetings. Jason said his department wants to be notified immediately and be involved at the beginning. He is willing to sit down at the end of the season and go over things.

The three month outlook shows the weather to be hotter but wetter than normal. Each wet day reduces the fire risk but more vegetation grows. The rain doesn't help the trees much; they are still drought stressed and tinder dry.

There are currently no prescribed fires planned because it is too wet. The one scheduled burn has a power corridor on its edge. Mechanical projects are still going on and the Forest Service would like to hear about other possible projects like the one in Clear Creek. They talked about the problems along the Price River because of the Seeley Fire floods.

Jason said his LAPC's are every other month on the third Monday. The next one scheduled is in July. Hal would like to attend those. Jason said he has been asked if trainings could be pushed down to the private companies who are out in the gas fields. The Forest Service is also getting phone calls about this.


Hal said the next meeting will be at the end of the fire season. He thanked everyone for their time.

2) Discussion concerning Memorandum of Understanding between the County and State Wild Land Fire – J. Llewelyn

This item was tabled.

The meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

ATTEST:


Seth Oveson, County Clerk/Auditor

